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Effects of Public Funding on State Legislative Elections

Eva L. Lauer
Trinity College, eva.lauer@trincoll.edu

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Eva Lauer

Trinity College

Political Science Department

Advisor: Professor Diana Evans

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Introduction to Public Funding:

Campaign spending is an important aspect of any election since the amount that a candidate spends towards an election can have a significant impact on the results. For this reason, public funding becomes an important factor in the outcome of elections where public funding is available and is used by one or more of the candidates in a race. Over the past forty years, public funding has been growing in popularity for state elections (Wattson 2002). Currently, twenty-five states provide some variation of public funding for their political candidates (National Conference of State Legislatures hereafter as NCSL 2013).

Public funding is a fairly new concept for democracy and it is constantly evolving. Although the primary purpose of public funding programs is to make candidates more responsible to citizens, and less dependent on campaign contributions from PACs and interest groups, public funding also provides opportunities for atypical candidates, such as candidates from demographics that are under represented in office, candidates who are not independently wealthy, and candidates who have not previously held office, to run for office. When candidates use public funding, elections between incumbents and challengers become more competitive, which in turn can lead to a better democracy (Briffault 1999, 563). Challengers can benefit greatly from public funding since they have the ability to run a campaign with a greater chance of success and since they are able to spend a larger amount of money earlier on in the race than they would without public funding. Likewise, public funding can reduce the incumbency advantage, since the candidates would have a more equal amount of money to spend on their campaigns, which leads to an equal opportunity to spread their campaign messages. As a result, public funding creates a greater chance for the candidate with the best message instead of the largest budget to win an election.

Since many incumbents view public funding as a threat to their incumbency advantage, these incumbents have attempted to prevent the scope in which public funding can be used in an election. As a result, there have been several Supreme Court cases that have resulted in limiting public funding's effectiveness by striking down certain aspects of public funding laws. However, some incumbents accept public funding in their campaigns because there are advantages for them, including not having to spend time fundraising, which gives them more time to focus on campaigning.

The meaning and scope of public funding varies from state to state. Generally, state governments provide public funding or public financing to candidates or parties, in varying amounts depending on the program, in exchange for an agreement from the recipients of funding to abide by limits on their ability to accept and spend contributions from outside sources (NCSL 2013). State public funding programs vary immensely from partial-subsidy programs to full public funding programs that can be provided either to a political party or directly to a candidate (NCSL 2013). In this study, I will focus on programs that provide money directly to candidates, I will primarily focus on the states with full public funding programs, which are Connecticut, Maine, and Arizona, and I will analyze Minnesota's subsidy program for a comparison between a subsidy program and the full public funding programs.

Introduction to Chapter:

The main purpose of this chapter is to state my research question, to state my hypothesis, to discuss why I selected my question, to discuss how my research will differ from existing literature on the subject, to talk about why my question is important, and to outline the remainder of the thesis.

<u>Statement of Research Question and How it was Selected:</u>

In this paper, I will explain the purpose of public funding, discuss how public financing laws can impact election, and analyze the impact of Connecticut, Maine, Arizona, and Minnesota's public funding laws in order to provide a better understanding of the significance of implementing public funding laws. Specifically, I will focus on state legislative elections and compare the amount of candidates who accept public funding, to see how effectively the states can incentivize candidates and to compare the competitiveness of elections. Additionally, I will compare the competitiveness of elections with public funding to elections without public funding to see which state's public funding program has the greatest difference in competitiveness between elections with funding and those without funding.

My research questions are: " Among the states that provide full public funding for their legislative candidates, which state is most successfully able to provide public funding programs that incentivize their state legislative candidates to accept the limitations of their public financing laws?" and "Which state has the most competitive elections among major party legislative candidates who accept public funding for their campaigns?"

During the spring of my junior year I worked as a research assistant for Professor Diana Evans as she gathered data on Connecticut's clean election program. At the end of the semester, as a requirement to receive credit, I wrote a paper about the data. Through my research about the clean election program, I became interested in public funding and how it could differ among states that have similar programs.

As I furthered my research on public funding, I learned more about the purposes behind these programs. As a result, I decided to focus on the ability of the program to incentivize candidates to accept public funding, since the program cannot be successful without willing participants. Additionally, I wanted to see if there was an increase in competitiveness as a result of public funding between candidates who both receive public funding and between candidates where one candidate receives public funding and one does not, so that I could compare the change in competitiveness with two candidates who did not receive public funding and then compare the differences among the states I selected. An increase in competitiveness when public funding is used is important because it would seem that challengers would consider it before deciding to accept public funding since they also have to agree to the limitations that come with public funding, including spending only money provided through public funding. Additionally, these factors become important to citizens who would want more competitive elections since competitive elections are an important factor for a good democracy. It is also important for states with public funding to consider maintaining their public funding programs and for states without public funding programs to consider creating a public funding program for their candidates.

In deciding which data to focus my research on, I first decided to focus on the state legislative candidates because they would provide the greatest sample size for my analysis. Then, I used the information provided by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) on public funding to determine which type of programs I should focus my attention on. From the NCSL, I found that Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut all provided full public funding for their legislators and each had fairly new public financing laws. I chose to analyze these states and Minnesota, because Minnesota was the first state to provide a public funding option for their candidates and because their program differed the most from the full public funding programs, since Minnesota provides subsidy instead of grants.

Hypothesis:

For the first portion of my research question, in order to measure the ability for public funding to incentivize state legislative candidates to accept the limitations of their public financing laws, I will compare the percentage of candidates who accept public funding in each state. My hypothesis is that Maine, Connecticut, and Arizona will have similar success in their ability to provide public funding programs because they each offer similar public funding options. To the contrary, Minnesota will be less able to incentivize candidates because, Minnesota's program seems to be less successful in creating competitive elections based on Donnay and Ramsden's findings, in which they determined that Minnesota's public funding typically adversely affected the challengers' vote percentage. This will be discussed further in chapter 3 and because Minnesota offers less funding than the other states do (Donnay and Ramsden 1995).

For my second research question, I hypothesize that the state that has the most competitive elections among major party legislative candidates who accept public funding for their campaigns is Arizona. This is because Arizona had the most competitive elections among major party legislative candidates who accept public funding for their campaigns in Malhotra's study, where he concluded that Arizona has more competitive elections than Maine because Arizona has larger districts so providing more money to candidates makes a bigger impact than in Maine (Malhotra 2008, 275-276). Since Connecticut also has significantly smaller districts than Arizona I expect to similarly find through my research that Arizona has more competitive elections than Maine and Connecticut when both major party legislative candidates accept public funding (Malhotra 2008, 275-276). Additionally, since Minnesota has a different program that is more limited than Arizona, Connecticut, and Maine in that they provide subsidies instead of full public funding and since Donnay and Ramsden find Minnesota's public subsidy program to adversely affect the challenger, I expect that Minnesota will provide the smallest change in competitiveness between elections where neither major party candidate accepted public funds and where both major party candidates accept public funds (1995).

How I differ:

My research will analyze and compare the public financing laws in the four states that currently provide public funding for their state legislatures. In the existing literature on public financing in state legislatures, scholars have studied each state's programs individually, or collectively without comparison of all the full public funding programs, although Malhotra compared Maine's program with Arizona's program (2008) . As a result, there is a lack of comparison between states, which is the gap that I would like to fill through my research. In doing this, I hope that there will be a better understanding of which aspects of public funding programs are most effective in incentivizing candidates to participate and to foster competitive elections among those who accept public funding. In demonstrating the overall benefit of public funding among these states, I will show the possible benefit that these programs could have on states that currently do not have public funding programs.

Why Analyzing Public Funding is Important:

These research questions are important because looking further into how public funding can affect elections and comparing these results among states with these programs could provide more information for states that might consider providing public funding for their legislative candidates so that they could provide their candidates with the best program possible. Additionally, campaign spending is one of the most important factors in election results since spending by a candidate increases their name recognition. Allowing challengers to have access to more money earlier in the race decreases incumbency advantage, which can provide fairer elections.

Outline of Thesis:

In chapter two, I will primarily provide a literature review on public funding. I will explain some of the theories behind public funding to provide information on what types of research has already been done on public funding. Then, after providing background information on the purposes of public funding, in order to better explain the importance of public funding, I will discuss some of the key attempts and successes at implementing public funding in the United States, primarily at the congressional and presidential level. Then, to show other variations of public funding and the impact that they have made on elections, I will provide insight on the general reasons as to why the state public funding laws are the way they are. Finally, I will discuss court decisions that have impacted public funding programs.

In chapter three, I will focus on the actual laws that are in place and the histories on public funding in Connecticut, Maine, Arizona, and Minnesota. After providing background and history of public funding in the state legislatures that I am covering in this paper, I will explain how I selected the states that I am analyzing. Then, I will discuss literature written about each state and their actual law. Finally, I will compare and contrast the current programs from each state in order to highlight possible factors that could affect my results.

In chapter four, I discuss the method I used in collecting and analyzing the data and I will explain why certain variables were chosen and then I analyze the data collected on state legislature elections in Connecticut, Maine, Arizona, and Minnesota. Finally, I provide the results from my data analysis.

Chapter five will be my concluding chapter. After summarizing my research, I will further discuss the conclusions from chapter four and discuss the possible reasons for the results that were found. Finally, I will discuss the future of public funding and impact of public funding on the democratic process.

Summary:

In this paper I plan to analyze existing state public funding programs, which I hope will lead to a better understanding of the possible benefits of public funding. I will conduct this analysis by explaining existing literature on public funding, discussing public financing laws, and collecting and analyzing data on public funding from Maine, Arizona, Connecticut, and Minnesota.

Chapter 2: Background on Public Funding

Chapter Introduction:

In order to understand how public funding developed into the way that it is now typically implemented, it is important to review the history of public funding. Additionally, it is important to understand the reasons for implementing public funding in order to understand the reason for my research question. In this chapter, I will provide a literature review; discuss the purpose of public funding and the theories that have been developed regarding public funding; give a brief history of public funding; discuss important court decisions regarding public funding; and explain the significance of this information to my comparison of state public funding programs.

Literature Review on Campaign Funding:

One of the most important articles that explain some of the effect of campaign spending is "The Effects of Campaign Spending in Congressional Elections" by Gary Jacobson (1978). Jacobson focuses on the effects of spending in Congressional elections in order to gain a better understanding of how an increase in spending affects incumbents and challengers. He begins by outlining the benefits of campaign funding in his article. He demonstrates that, in Congressional elections, "the marginal gains from a given increase in campaign spending are much greater for challengers than for incumbents," using data from the 1972 and 1974 House elections (Jacobson 1978, 489). He does this by separating the challengers from the incumbents and tracks their increases in spending to determine their correlation. He determines that the marginal gains for the challenger occur because challengers must spend money to make themselves known to the public since incumbents have greater name recognition among the electorate. (Jacobson 1978, 489). Furthermore, he concludes that overall spending by both candidates can benefit the challenger more than it benefits the incumbent in an election, because spending by the challenger makes them more known to the electorate whereas spending on the part of the incumbent typically has little effect, since the incumbent is already well known in the district. As a result, public funding for candidates increases the competitiveness of an election (Jacobson 1978, 489; Malhotra 2008, 264). Even if incumbents receive an equal amount of money as a challenger "their additional spending does not counterbalance the effects of greater spending by challengers" (Jacobson 1978, 489).

Jacobson continues his analysis on the effects of campaign spending in his article "The Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections: New Evidence for Old Arguments" (1990). He uses a survey on voting intentions taken throughout an election cycle to determine the role of campaign spending in House elections (Jacobson 1990, 343). Through his analysis he reasserts that the relationship between incumbent and challenger's spending from his 1978 article still holds true, concluding that the number of votes for incumbents tends to decrease when their spending increases (Jacobson 1990, 334). This results from the fact that they "…spend more money the more strongly they are challenged, and the stronger the challenge, the worse the incumbent does" (Jacobson 1990, 334). He explains this loss of votes by incumbents further by saying that, since "…every member of Congress, saturates their districts with information about themselves, their virtues and services, before the formal campaign begins," challengers must expend substantial resources in order to prove that they are viable candidates (Jacobson 1990, 334). Additionally, since "voters are demonstrably reluctant to vote for candidates they know nothing about…" incumbents have an advantage over their challengers (Jacobson 1990, 335). Furthermore, Jacobson explains that "campaign spending may affect the vote, but the (expected) vote affects campaign contributions", which can make it exceedingly difficult for a challenger to raise funds (1990, 335).

These analyses by Jacobson explain some of the barriers that a challenger faces in attempting to become a viable candidate. Because of these barriers, a challenger is most able to compete against an incumbent when they have served in other offices or when the challenger is able to spend their personal wealth on their campaign.

In "Public Funding and Democracy", Richard Briffault discusses campaign financing as a whole, as well as public funding of elections with the purpose of conveying that "public funding can be made to work if we take seriously the lessons from our experience with public funding so far" (1999, 566). Historically, public funding programs have had goals that are similar to the states that currently provide public funding. Briffault believes that a public finance system, as a whole, is central to democracy, pointing out that it creates "(i) fair and vigorous competition among candidates; (ii) equality of voter influence on electoral outcomes; and (iii) recognition that the campaign finance system can affect the integrity of the political process" (Briffault 1999, 563). Additionally, he recognizes that most elections, in which one candidate outspends their opponent, are uncompetitive (Briffault 1999, 563).

Briffault also discusses legislation that was proposed or passed as an alternative to public funding that we typically see on the state level. Briffault discusses two of these alternatives to public funding on the national level that have been suggested in the past illustrating how none of the alternatives encompass all the benefits that public funding provides. The first idea would be deregulation. On the national level, deregulation would mean a repeal of the Federal Election Campaign Act, which was implemented on the national level without being very effective. The idea was that deregulation would “eliminate the evasions, the end-run tactics, and the fine legal distinctions that make a mockery of the current campaign finance laws” (Briffault 1999, 564). However, deregulation would not enhance the competitiveness of elections because it would not benefit candidates; it would only affect the transparency of elections. The second approach is to reform existing regulations by restricting contributions, preventing soft money contributions, and prohibiting issue advocacy spending, some of which has already been done (Briffault 1999, 565). Although this approach would help to provide cleaner elections, it is not likely to enhance electoral competition because it does not provide an equal amount of money to each candidate’s campaigns and because the candidate who spends the most will typically win (Briffault 1999, 565).

Mayer, Werner, and Williams discuss the theory of increased of competitiveness when public funding programs are implemented and determined whether public funding programs enhanced competitiveness in “Do Public Funding Programs Enhance Electoral Competition?” (2006). They did this using data “from 1990–2004, for elections to the lower house in the state legislatures in Arizona, Hawaii, Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin” and analyzing the “the percentage of incumbents who faced a major-party opponent,“ “the percentage of incumbents who were in a competitive race, defined as one in which the winner received less than 60 percent of the two-party vote,” and “the percentage of incumbents who ran for and were reelected to office” (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 256-7). In comparing “the percentage of incumbents who faced a major-party opponent” among the states they analyze, they found that Wisconsin and Arizona had the most unopposed races and Maine, Minnesota, and Hawaii having much higher percentages of competitive races (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 258). When analyzing “the percentage of incumbents who were in a competitive race, defined as one in which the winner received less than 60 percent of the two-party vote," they found that Hawaii, Maine, and Minnesota increase in competitiveness through the election years they analyzed (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 259). Additionally, they found that Wisconsin was by far the least competitive of the states (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 259). For "the percentage of incumbents who ran for and were reelected to office," Wisconsin, again, had the least competitive elections; however, each state analyzed saw a drop in incumbent re-election rates from1990 to 2004 (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 260-1).

In addition to their analysis, they provide four arguments for why public funding enhances competition. The first argument is that there is a vicious cycle in which candidates without money are not taken seriously so people do not contribute to their campaign (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 245). This can make it difficult for potential challengers, especially challengers without personal wealth (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 245). The second point is that public funding reduces the incumbent's advantage over the challenger to fundraise for their campaign (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 246). Their third point is that public funding reduces the amount of influence contributors have on candidates when the take office, making officeholder more accountable to their constituents (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 246). The last argument is that public funding can cut campaign cost, since candidates are not trying to outspend each other (Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 246).

Background on the Purposes of Public Funding and Theories:

Several states, such as Connecticut, originally implemented their public funding programs as a result of recent scandals in an effort to make officials more accountable. However, although public funding programs not only make candidates more responsible to citizens, or less dependent on campaign contributions from PACs and interest groups, they provide opportunities for candidates (Malhotra 2008, 264). In particular, prospective candidates, who would ordinarily have difficulty running for office, can afford to run for office since public financing of campaigns helps to level the playing field in campaigns economically (Malhotra 2008, 264; Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 245). Without public financing, incumbents running for reelection rarely face quality challengers because incumbents are much more able to raise substantially more money than most challengers and they are able to do so earlier on in the race (Malhotra 2008, 264). This is because incumbents have the ability to "perform constituency service…and deliver distributive benefits to their districts" in addition to their ability to raise money much more rapidly than a challenger (Malhotra 2008, 268). However, with the implementation of full public funding programs, challengers have the ability to receive the same amount of money as the incumbent (Malhotra 2008, 264; Mayer, Werner, and Williams 2006, 245). This presents challengers with a greater chance of unseating an incumbent than they would have without public funding (Malhotra 2008, 264) In particular, unless a challenger is willing and able to spend a large amount of their own wealth on their campaign, it is difficult for a challenger to become a viable candidate without public funding. Additionally, instead of receiving large contributions from a few corporations or interest groups, public funding allows candidates to receive small donations from the citizens that they would serve if they are elected. This creates a relationship between the people and the candidates instead of the corporations or interest group and candidates.

Skeptics argue that public funding for candidates would attract low-quality challengers that would ordinarily have difficulties fundraising (Malhotra 2008, 264). However, as Malhotra argues, the conditions that must be met in order to receive public funding are successfully able to prevent low-quality challengers from receiving a grant through public funding, which he determines to be true in Maine and Arizona (Malhotra 2008, 264).

Although public funding is typically viewed as beneficial to challengers, it is also beneficial to incumbents. With full public funding programs, incumbents can focus more on their position in office or campaigning since they do not have to fundraise for their campaigns beyond raising qualifying funds. They also can focus more on their constituents instead of listening to their campaign donors. In order to fund campaigns, it is typically necessary to accept large campaign donations, which often are provided by companies that are seeking access to the politician once they are elected (Brifault 1999, 564). Large political donations can create a conflict of interest for politicians when an interest group that significantly supported their campaign asks for something different than the politician's constituents (Garrett 2011, 12). This argument is made on both the state and national level among those who want to adopt or have already adopted public funding programs (Garrett 2011, 12).

History of Attempts and Successes in the Implementation of Public Funding:

Although public financing is being implemented more frequently now, it is not a new concept in American politics. As Garrett discusses, in 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt made the first attempt at proposing a public financing system, which he intended to be used for presidential elections, during his State of the Union address (Garrett 2011, 11). It was not until 1956 that Congress considered using Roosevelt's idea of public financing for elections (Garrett 2011, 18). In the wake of a scandal, a bill was introduced to Congress that would provide public financing to Congressional candidates on a voluntary basis; however, there was no further action after its introduction (Garrett 2011, 18; 19). Senator Neuberger (D-OR), who introduced the bill, feared that without public financing, accepting money could be potentially corrupting and he claimed "large private contributions are distasteful for candidates and donors alike" (Garrett 2011, 20). Opponents of the bill felt that it was overly punitive claiming that supporters of public financing "use isolated cases of abuse to make the claim for broad reform" (Garrett 2011, 20).

Despite criticisms, there were many other attempts to implement public financing of Congressional elections after Senator Neuberger's attempt throughout the 1960s (Garrett 2011, 20). Although a presidential public financing bill was passed in 1966, it was repealed a year later (Garrett 2011, 20). It was not until 1971 that Congress passed the Federal Election Campaign Act to replace the Corrupt Practices Act, which was inadequate for dealing with campaign finance (Garrett 2011, 21). In the same year, Congress was able to implement voluntary public funding for presidential candidates (Garrett 2011, 21).

Court Decisions that have Impacted Public Funding Laws:

Since campaign spending laws were first implemented, there have been many court cases ruling on the constitutionality of campaign spending laws. Arguably, the most important cases on campaign spending is *Buckley v. Valeo*, which was decided in 1976 (Cornell University Law School 2014a). In that case, the constitutionality of several provisions in The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 was challenged, which all included limitations on contributions and spending (Cornell University Law School 2014a). The Supreme Court found that restricting a candidate's campaign spending was a restriction of free speech, which established the precedent that spending money was a form of speech (Cornell University Law School 2014a). The court also decided that limits on contributions were acceptable (Cornell University Law School 2014a). One exception the Supreme Court found in their decision was voluntary restrictions on spending such as a candidate agreeing to limit their spending in order to receive public funding, which is the case in Presidential Elections (Cornell University Law School 2014a).

Since *Buckley v. Valeo*, there have been many cases on the constitutionality of limiting campaign spending and campaign contributions, which have mostly drawn similar findings to *Buckley v. Valeo* (Cornell University Law School 2014a). In particular, the finding that restricting spending and contributions is unconstitutional since it restricts freedom of speech has become a prominent theme among cases on campaign spending (Cornell University Law School 2014a). One of these cases was *Randell v. Sorrell*, which was decided in 2006 (Cornell University Law School 2014b). In this case, Vermont's Act 64, which placed caps on all spending and campaign donations, was found to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court (Cornell University Law School 2014b). Vermont's Act 64 was created as a way to reduce the amount of time spent raising money for a campaign and to reduce overall campaign costs, however, the court found that Vermont's caps on spending and contributions was unconstitutional because the limits were so low that it would be difficult for a candidate to run a proper campaign, which could adversely affect challengers in particular (Cornell University Law School 2014b). Additionally, the court found that the spending limit restricted candidates' first amendment right to free speech, in a similar manner to the case of *Buckley v. Valeo* (Cornell University Law School 2014b).

Another case that prevented restrictions on spending during elections was *Davis v. Federal Election Commission,* which was decided in 2008 (Federal Election Commission 2014). In this case, Davis, a candidate for the House of Representatives, believed that his first amendment right to free speech was being violated by the "Millionaires' Amendment." This amendment was part of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 that provided amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971. This act allowed his opponent to have increased contribution limits because Davis was spending more than $350,000 of his personal wealth (Federal Elections Commission 2014). The Supreme Court found that the “Millionaires’ Amendment” was unconstitutional under the First Amendment for similar reasons to those provided in *Buckley v. Valeo (1976)* and *Randel v. Sorrell (2006)* deciding that it penalized candidates who spent their personal wealth for their campaign (Federal Election Commission 2014).

Because of these decisions, the only way to restrict spending and contributions is through voluntary programs, such as public funding. After states began implement public financing programs, cases arose on the constitutionality of public funding. These cases have had a serious impact on the ability of public funding programs to provide sufficient funding to candidates for their campaigns.

One of the most recent cases that have impacted public funding is *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett,* which was decided in 2011 (Brennan Center for Justice 2011). Arizona provides funds to candidates initially for their campaign and then candidates are granted additional funding to match their opponent if their opponent, who has not accepted public funding, outspends the amount of money they received initially (Brennan Center for Justice 2011). In its decision, the Supreme Court found that it was unconstitutional for candidates to receive these matching grants because it infringed on the First Amendment right to free speech of the candidate who did not accept public funding without a compelling reason (Brennan Center for Justice 2011). This Supreme Court decision has prevents all public funding programs “from giving extra money to publicly funded candidates facing privately funded rivals” (Davenport 2010). This decision was further applied specifically to Connecticut’s trigger provision in a Second Circuit Court of Appeals Case (Common Cause 2010). Additionally, Maine adjusted their public funding by removing their trigger provision after *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* was decided. As a result, Connecticut, Arizona, and Maine have each made changes to their public financing laws to abide by the Court's decision.

In Connecticut, *Green Party of Connecticut v. Garfield* went to the United States Court of Appeals. This case, which was decided in 2010, called into question whether Connecticut's public financing law is discriminatory against minor party candidates (Brennan Center for Justice 2014, 14). The U.S. Court of Appeals decided that they "…cannot conclude, on this record, that the statewide eligibility criteria impose an unfair or unnecessary burden on minor-party candidates in safe districts" (Brennan Center for Justice 2014, 36). Furthermore, they found that "grant amounts and expenditure limits" do not burden the minor party candidates who apply for public funding (Brennan Center for Justice 2014, 40). Because the case was overturned, it does not have an effect on Connecticut's public financing laws, although this result could change if it reaches the Supreme Court.

Significance:

This chapter demonstrates the possible impact that public financing laws can have on an election and discusses the cases that have affected the implementation of public funding. The literature review on campaign finance provided insight into the relationship between an incumbent and challenger, which can help to explain how public financing laws can increase competitiveness. Jacobson shows the vicious cycle that exists when a challenger attempts to fundraise. In particular, it is difficult for a challenger to gain legitimacy unless they have money to spend and it is difficult to raise money unless they have legitimacy. This makes it very difficult for a candidate to run unless they have personal wealth to spend on the campaign or unless they have held a previous office so they already have connections to possible contributors. When public funding is available to candidates, it lessens this burden of attempting to fundraise as a challenger. Additionally, public funding can increase competitiveness in elections and can help reduce incumbency advantage because spending benefits the challenger.

It is also important to remember the history of attempts to create public funding and campaign finance laws because it helps to provide background for why the laws in Minnesota, Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut were created. For this reason, it is also important to look at previous cases involving public funding and campaign finance laws.

The information in this chapter should provide a better understanding of public funding, which should help explain the data analysis in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Overview of Public Funding in Minnesota, Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut

Introduction:

The purpose of this chapter is to present the existing literature on public funding in Minnesota, Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut and analyze the public funding laws of each state. First, I will explain the reason for selecting the data that I chose. Second, I will discuss the existing literature and the laws of each individual state. Third, I will compare the laws of each state. Finally, I will discuss the possible impact of the differences in the laws of each state on the analysis that will be provided in Chapter 4.

How I selected the data:

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) provides a list of all “public funding programs” offered in twenty-five states (NCSL 2013). The NCSL website distinguishes the different types of state public funding programs that are currently in effect (NCSL 2013). Of the twenty-five states with some variation of a public funding program, the NCSL website divides the programs into three categories, “those which provide funds directly to individual candidates, those that provide funds to political parties, and those which provide tax incentives to citizens who make political contributions” (NCSL 2013).

In deciding which elections to use for my research, I determined that state legislative candidates from the House and the Senate would provide the largest data set to analyze, as opposed to gubernatorial or judicial elections that have less positions in an election, thus making this analysis the most accurate. Additionally, I chose to look at programs that provided full public funding for qualifying candidates, since those programs would best show the impact of public funding. Of the fourteen states that provide public funds directly to candidates, three states provide full clean election programs to their legislators, which met my criteria (NCSL 2013). These clean election programs are designed to take interest group money out of elections by providing public funds in place of interest group donations, which makes candidates who are elected more responsible to the people and not to interest groups. The states that provide such programs are: Connecticut, Maine, and Arizona (NCSL 2013). Additionally, I will compare the public funding programs in these states to the public funding program in Minnesota, which was the first public funding program to be implemented on the state level (Wattson 2002). Minnesota's public funding program differs immensely from Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut's public funding programs, providing subsidies to qualifying candidates while allowing the candidates to spend their own campaign funds, instead of providing qualifying candidates with funds and preventing them from spending any other money. Because of the difference between Minnesota's subsidy program and the other states' full public funding programs, comparing their programs through this analysis could determine whether the new laws are more preferable than the Minnesota law, which could provide a clearer understand of the impacts of such laws than just analyzing the differences between full public funding programs (Wattson 2002).

Minnesota:

In 1974, as a response to Watergate, Minnesota took the first step towards cleaner elections with the implementation of the "Ethical Practices Act" (Wattson 2002). This act established a voluntary subsidy program for candidates (Wattson 2002). In particular, voters could contribute five dollars to fund elections on their tax forms with the option of allocating the money to a specific party (Donnay and Ramsden, 1995, 352). The money collected was then distributed among candidates within the districts that it was collected from proportionately to candidates that chose to participate[1] (Donnay and Ramsden, 1995, 353). Since Minnesota found that this system disproportionately favored incumbents, as candidates were still allowed to raise money independently, the system was revised in 1982 in order to include spending limits for candidates (Donnay and Ramsden, 1995, 353). Again, the system seemed to favor incumbents because an incumbent generally has the advantage of name recognition over a challenger and because spending limits made it more difficult for challengers to increase their name recognition (Panagopoulos 2011, 208). In 1993, as a result of the ineffectiveness of their public funding system, Minnesota's "Governor Carlson insisted on supplementing the general account with a permanent appropriation from the general fund" in the amount of $1.5 million for each subsequent election, which was passed through their legislative process (Wattson 2002).

Under the current system, House candidates must raise $1,500 and Senate candidates must raise $3,000 in qualifying contributions in order to be considered a "viable" candidate for public funding (Wattson 2002). Additionally, they must agree to limit their spending to the amount specified by the law (Wattson 2002). Currently, this limits campaign spending to $30,000 for Senate candidates and $60,000 for House candidates (Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board, hereafter as MCFPDB 2013a, 25). First time candidates for an office are allowed to spend 10% more on their campaign than other candidates and candidates that won a primary by less than a two percent vote margin can spend 20% more than the base spending limit (MCFPDB 2013a, 40). For the 2008 House election cycle, the average subsidy provided was 24.57% of the average campaign expenditure, similarly, for the 2010 House election cycle they

[1] See appendix for full details

were 26.55% of the average campaign expenditure and for the 2010 Senate election cycle they were 35.07% of the average campaign expenditure[2] (MCFPDB 2008; MCFPD 2010).

Donnay and Ramsden conducted an analysis of the public funding system of Minnesota's state House and state Senate (1995,357). By including the years from 1966 to 1990, they were able to analyze the system for the ten years before public funding as well as the fourteen years after the implementation of public funding (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 356). They focused their analysis on the level of competitiveness after the implementation of public funding (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 355). They found "that the share of the vote received by incumbents actually increased" during the first election after the implementation of public funding, seeing an increase of .374 percentage points on average among House incumbents and an increase of .029 percentage points among Senate incumbents (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 355). Additionally, between 1976 and 1990 in the Minnesota House, they found that incumbents saw an 8.19 percent increase in vote percentage when both the incumbent and the challenger received public funding versus when the House incumbent and challenger did not accept public funding (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 356-357). However, after reaching this conclusion, Donnay and Ramsden divided the data into smaller categories to try to better explain the reasoning for the results (1995, 359). Additionally, they set controls in the data including: "controlling for the variation between challengers and incumbents both in terms of how much each takes from the state treasury and how much they spend overall" and controlling for the fact that incumbents tend to mirror challengers in spending and accepting public funding, meaning that an incumbent will spend more on an election if a challenger begins to spend more and an incumbent will be more likely to accept public funding when a challenger does (Donnay and

[2] See appendix for total subsidies given in each election year

Ramsden 1995, 358). With these controls in place, they found that incumbents who accepted public funding saw a decline in the proportion of the vote such that, "when the data for all Senate elections between 1976 and 1990 are aggregated, the average Senate incumbent who accepted public campaign financing experienced a 6.68% drop in vote share" (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 361). Still, they found that in both the Senate and the House, when a challenger accepts public funding, the incumbent was advantaged (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 361). They conclude that this advantage is "largely a reflection of a bias in the Minnesota System" towards incumbents because typically incumbents benefit from name recognition so they do not need as much funding to be recognized, unlike a challenger (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 361). In their data, they found that an increase in spending by a challenger led to a higher vote percentage for the challenger (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 362). Therefore, although they initially thought that the system favored the incumbent, they concluded that any increase in public funding helped the challenger so that, if the system was improved so that the funding provided to challengers was greater, public funding could help facilitate more competitive elections (Donnay and Ramsden 1995, 362).

Since this article by Donnay and Ramsden was published, it appears that Minnesota has made an effort to better aid the challenger in their campaign when they take advantage of public funding. With the implementation of the new rule that allows candidates who are running for an office for the first time to spend ten percent more than the base limit on candidate spending, there would appear to be more of an advantage for the challenger in districts where both the incumbent and the challenger accept public funding than in their previous system (MCFPDB 2013a, 40).

Arizona:

In 2000, Arizona's "Citizen's Clean Elections Act" went into effect (NCSL 2007). House and Senate Candidates have the same criteria when applying for public funding (NCSL 2007). In order for a House or Senate candidate to qualify for public funding in Arizona, a candidate would have to raise $220 in $5 donations with their "seed money" which may total up to $2,500 (NCSL 2007; Malhotra 2008, 267). Once a legislative candidate has qualified and signed an agreement to follow the restrictions of the public financing law, which primarily restricts candidates from receiving money from outside sources for their campaign during the election cycle, they are given their initial disbursement of $10,000 for primary elections and $15,000 for general elections, which is adjusted biennially[3] (Malhotra 2008, 267). If necessary, during the general election, candidates may receive additional money of up to $75,000 if they are in a competitive election (Malhotra 2008, 267). This, however, has been changed due to the 2010 Supreme Court decision, *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett*, which prevents Arizona "from giving extra money to publicly funded candidates facing privately funded rivals" (Davenport 2010). This decision could affect the number of candidates who accept public funding in future elections, since they could potentially receive much less money than their opponent spends, which would give them a distinct disadvantage that could disincentivize them from accepting public funding. Additionally, it could affect the competitiveness of elections between a candidate who accepts public funding and a candidate who does not because the candidate who does not accept public funding could easily outspend the candidate who accepts public funding.

[3] See appendix for full details

Malhotra studied the effects of public funding in Arizona, comparing the competitiveness of state Senate elections before and after the implementation of public funding (2008, 265). By using the 1992-2000 elections for his analysis, he compared the 1992-1998 elections, which took place before public funding, with the 2000 election cycle, which was the first year after their public funding law went into effect (Malhotra 2008, 265). Before public funding, he found that races with an incumbent running were significantly less competitive than open-seat elections, finding that "the presence of an incumbent decreases the number of effective candidates by about .30 and expands the margin of victory by over 20 percentage points" (Malhotra 2008, 273). This is because an incumbent typically has an advantage over a challenger since they have the advantage of name recognition and they usually have a greater ability to raise money for their campaigns. When looking at the 2000 data, Malhotra found that while public funding did not significantly affect the competitiveness of the Senate races as a whole for the 2000 election cycle, public funding had a significant effect on the competitiveness of races in which public funding was involved (Malhotra 2008, 273). Specifically, he found that effects of public funding are greater in elections with an incumbent running than they are in open seat races because, without public funding, incumbents generally have name recognition which gives them an advantage, while open seat races are generally more competitive because both candidates have a more equal chance so adding public funding has the ability to change elections with incumbents more (Malhotra 2008, 274). This is also because the challenger was able to receive funding that matched the amount of money the incumbent spent, narrowing the incumbent advantage (Malhotra 2008, 274). Additionally, he found that clean election laws are "effective tools of enhancing competition, but their impact is not all-powerful and depends on the characteristics of individual contestants" (Malhotra 2008, 277). He concludes that public financing in Arizona most substantially affects the electoral competition when a challenger elects to use the system (Malhotra 2008, 274). This follows Jacobson's conclusion, since there is an increase in spending for the challenger early on in the race for challengers who elect to use public funding.

Maine:

Maine's "Clean Election Act" went into effect in 2000 (Malhotra 2008, 265). Currently, Maine's legislative candidates who choose to use public funding, can receive up to $100 per individual contributor, totaling $500 for House candidates and $1,500 for Senate candidates, as seed money towards an election (MCEA 2013). Additionally, candidates are unable to receive money from lobbyists or their clients (MCEA 2013). Between January 1 and April 20, House candidates must receive 60 qualifying contributions and Senate candidates must receive 175 qualifying contributions, each of $5 of more (MCEA 2013). Then candidates sign a declaration of intent, which states that they "…understand that it is [their] responsibility to review and to comply with the Maine Election Law, and the Commission's rules and policies" (Maine Declaration of Intent 2010). The law also requires greater transparency by requiring any contribution of more than $50 must be reported (MCEA 2013). In 2008, the average amount of public funding given to legislative candidates was $10,326.33[4] (MCEA 2009).

As with Arizona, Malhotra discusses Maine's public funding system in "The Impact of Public Financing on Electoral Competition: Evidence from Arizona and Maine", in which he conducts an analysis of the competitiveness of elections in Maine, comparing the level of competitiveness in the state Senate before and after the implementation of Maine's "Clean Election Act" in 2000 (Malhotra 2008, 265). By using the 1994-2002 election cycles for Maine,

[4] See appendix for full details

Malhotra compared the 1994-1998 election cycles, which were before the implementation of their public funding law, to the 2000 and 2002 election cycles, which were after the implementation of public funding (Malhotra 2008, 265). Malhotra states that the analyses of the Maine Senate "nearly parallel findings to the Arizona Senate" in that "public financing did not enhance competition across all districts" but it did in races in which the challenger accepted public funding (Malhotra 2008, 275). Specifically, before the Clean Election Act, he found that incumbency and competitiveness had a negative relationship such that the presence of an incumbent decreases competition (Malhotra 2008, 275). However, he found that this correlation is less significant than it was in Arizona such that the presence of an incumbent decreased the number of effective candidates by about .15 and expanded the margin of victory by .14 (Malhotra 2008, 276-277). Malhotra hypothesizes that the reason for the difference between Maine and Arizona's correlation between incumbency and competitiveness is that Maine has a less professional legislature so elections are not as competitive and that the districts in Arizona are much larger, making an increase in campaign spending more significant than in Maine's smaller districts (Malhotra 2008, 275-276).

Connecticut:

Connecticut's clean election program, called the "Citizens' Election Program", was first implemented in 2008 in the wake of corruption scandals involving their ex-Governor John Rowland (Malhotra 2008, 278). One of the biggest factors that can lead to corruption is a candidate who accepts political contributions and gifts from corporations that conducted business with the state. In an effort to prevent future corruption, the public financing legislation was passed by the legislature.

In order for state Senate candidates to receive public funding, they first have to raise $1,500 from at least 300 individuals with contributions ranging from $5 to $100 and then they have to agree to forego outside contributions after receiving public funding[5] (Citizens' Election Program 2013; NCSL 2007). Candidates are approved for different sums of money depending on the race (Citizens' Election Program 2013, 14). For example, unopposed candidates receive a smaller grant than opposed candidates (Citizens' Election Program 2013, 9). Additionally, in a party-dominant district, in which enrollment in one party exceeds enrollment in another party by at least twenty percent, candidates are eligible for larger grants in primary campaigns because the primary election is usually a more competitive race (Citizens' Election Program 2013, 8). For general election candidates with a major party opponent, the state Senate candidates received $88,400 and the state House candidates received $26,000 (State Elections Enforcement Commission 2010, 5). As in the case of Arizona, Connecticut legislative candidates that accept public funding will no longer be able to receive "extra funds based on their opponents' spending", which could hinder their ability to campaign if they accept public funds (Shesgreen 2011). This decision was further applied specifically to Connecticut's trigger provision in a Second Circuit Court of Appeals Case (Common Cause 2010).

According to the Citizens' Election Program, the goal of public funding in Connecticut is to promote "clean" elections (CEP 2013, 1). They claim that their program allows candidates to "compete without reliance on special interest money", which ensures that they are free from influence by interest groups (CEP 2013, 1). In turn, this program helps to restore "public confidence in the electoral and legislative process" (Casey 2012, 1). This program also helps to

[5] See appendix for full details

increase citizen participation and to provide the public with better information on campaign finance (Casey 2012, 1).

<u>Comparison of Public Funding Programs:</u>

Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut have very similar public funding programs in place. Each of these states has full public funding programs as opposed to a subsidy program, like Minnesota. In Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut, candidates raise qualifying contributions and sign an agreement that they will not receive any additional outside contributions. Then candidates receive an initial amount of funding, which could be increased based on the competitiveness of the race in elections prior to the *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* decision in 2011. Additionally, because Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut all wrote their legislation within a decade of each other, it is expected that they would be similar to one another.

On the other hand, Minnesota's public financing program differs from the programs in Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut. Since Minnesota's system was introduced in 1976 and was the first state public funding system, it has been more of a process of "trial and error" while evolving into its current state. Like the other states with public funding programs, Minnesota requires its candidates to raise qualifying contributions. Additionally, Minnesota's public funding program requires candidates, who accept their subsidies, to sign an agreement to abide by the terms of the public funding program, which includes a spending limitation. However, Minnesota election laws differ from the other states with public funding since the law allows first-time candidates and candidates who won their primaries by small margins, to spend more money than other candidates. Additionally, the Minnesota election laws allow candidates to continue to raise and spend their own money in addition to public funding, so long as they stay within their total spending limits. Finally, while Minnesota's program is primarily a subsidy program, where candidates are still expected to raise their own money, the other states' programs are clean elections programs, which prohibit candidates from accepting outside contributions.

Significance:

The information on the public funding programs of each state provides insight that will be important for a proper analysis of the effectiveness of the public funding programs. Since each program differs in some ways from one another, these differences could have an impact on the findings. For example, as Malhotra noted, competitiveness in Maine and Arizona differed because the larger district size in Arizona made an increase in funding more significant, therefore making Arizona more competitive (2008, 275-276). I expect that these differences will be even more apparent when I compare Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut with Minnesota. My hypothesis is that Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut will have similar findings when the competitiveness of elections with public funding are compared to elections without public funding while I expect to find Minnesota's competitiveness to be lower than the other states. One aspect of Minnesota's effectiveness in creating competitive election could be the amount that they provide in subsidies, if they do not provide enough, it could be difficult for a challenger to run a successful campaign.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

Introduction:

In this chapter, I will discuss my data collection method, present my findings, and provide a data analysis. The purpose of this chapter is to use election results from Maine, Arizona, Connecticut, and Minnesota to answer my research questions, which are: “Among the states that provide full public funding for their legislative candidates, which state is most successfully able to provide public funding programs that incentivize their state legislative candidates to accept the limitations of their public financing laws?” and “Which state has the most competitive elections among major party legislative candidates who accept public funding for their campaigns?”

How Data was Selected:

In order to determine which variables would be useful in answering my research questions, I first determined which elections to use for my analysis. I determined that 2008 and 2010 would be the best years to use in order to compare results since Connecticut’s public funding system was first used in a regular legislative election in 2008. Additionally, using 2008 and 2010 provides one presidential election, 2008, and one nonpresidential election, 2010, which can lower the effect of the national tides on the data.

Next, I narrowed my research to look at the vote margin of major party candidates. I decided to collect the vote count of the Democrat and the Republican, leaving out the minor party vote, which I then calculated as a percentage by dividing the candidates’ individual vote total by the sum of the Democrat and the Republicans vote totals. Then, I subtracted each of those percentages to determine vote margin, in order to determine the possibility of an increase in competitiveness when public funding is used. I also collected data on major party candidates who accepted public funding. I then divided each states' data into three groups: both major party candidates accepted public funding, one major party candidate accepted public funding, and neither major party candidate accepted public funding. I did not look at districts with only one major party candidate since those districts would not provide insight into the effect of public funding on competitiveness. I was then able to calculate the mean of the vote margin for each group for each state. This would help to show whether elections are more competitive in districts where both major party candidates accept funding, compared to districts where one or neither candidate accepts public funding. Additionally, this calculation can be used to compare each state's program.

I also collected data on the number of major party candidates in each state that accepted public funding and divided that number by the total number of major party candidates that ran in each state to find the percentage of major party candidates that used public funding in each state's legislative elections. This data can help determine how successfully a state is able to incentivize candidates to use their public funding systems, since an unsuccessful program is unlikely to attract candidates to apply for funding.

Data Used for the Analysis:

In order to answer my research questions, I assembled data from several sources. Below, I explain which sources were used for each portion of data; however, the full citation for each of these sources is listed in the bibliography.

For Minnesota, I used the "November 4, 2008 General Election Results" and the "November 2, 2010 General Election Results" found on the Minnesota Secretary of State's website for data on actual election results and I used the data on which candidates accepted subsidies provided by the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board in their “2007/2008 Campaign Finance Summary” and “2009/2010 Campaign Finance Summary” reports (Minnesota Secretary of State’s Office 2008; Minnesota Secretary of State’s Office 2010; MCFPDB 2007; MCFPDB 2009).

Similarly, I collected Maine’s election results from Maine’s Department of the Secretary of State on their “Election Results” page, and their data on which candidates accepted public funding from the “Candidate List” on Maine’s Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices website (Department of the Secretary of State of Maine 2014; Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices 2014).

I similarly found Arizona’s election results in “2008 General Election Results” and “November 2, 2010 General Election”, found on their Secretary of State’s website (Arizona Secretary of State’s Office 2008; Arizona Secretary of State’s Office 2009). Then I found data on which candidates accepted public funding on the Arizona Citizens’ Clean Elections Commission website under “All Candidate- Primary Election” (Arizona Citizens’ Clean Elections Commission 2014a).

For Connecticut, I found the election results at their Secretary of State’s website under “Election Results” and the Connecticut Elections Enforcement Commission had a compilation of candidates who accepted public funding on their “List of Participating and Nonparticipating Candidates” (Connecticut Secretary of State 2014; Connecticut Elections Enforcement Commission 2014).

Limitations in Data:

I found some difficulties while compiling the data. In particular, since there was a low number of districts in each state in which neither candidate accepted funding, it was difficult to accurately determine whether public funding increased competitiveness, although it could possibly indicate their program's successfulness, since they are able to incentivize such a large portion of candidates to accept public funding.

Another limitation in my data is that Arizona's State House has multimember districts, which makes it impossible to take the vote margin. As a result, data from Arizona that was used to show competitiveness was only taken from Senate races, although the House data on the number of Arizona candidates that accepted funding could still be used to show the percentage of candidates that accepted public funding.

Data Analysis:

For the first portion of my research question, in order to measure the ability for public funding to incentivize state legislative candidates to accept the limitations of their public financing laws, I compared the percentage of candidates who accept public funding in each state, which can be found it Tables 1 through 5. My hypothesis was that Maine, Connecticut, and Arizona would have similar success in their ability to incentivize candidates to accept public funding programs while Minnesota would be less able to incentivize candidates.

Table 1, below, displays the number of candidates who accepted public funding in each race and shows the percentage of candidates who accepted by race and in total for Minnesota. To find the "number of candidates who accepted public funding" I added the number of Republican and Democratic candidates from each district who accepted public funding for the general election. For the “total number of candidates” I added the number of Republican and Democrats from each district in the general election. To find the “number of candidates who did not accept public funding”, I subtracted the “number of candidates who accepted public funding” from the “total number of candidates”. Finally, I calculated the “percentage of candidates who accepted funding” by dividing the “number of candidates who accepted public funding” by the “total number of candidates”. As Minnesota did not have a Senate race in 2008, there was not data for that race.

Table 1: Minnesota Major Party Legislative Candidates who Accepted Public Funding by Election Year

	2008 House	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Number of Candidates who accepted Public Funding	261	239	120	620
Number of Candidates who did not accept Public Funding	7	29	12	48
Total Number of Candidates	268	268	132	668
Percentage of Candidates who accepted funding	97.39%	89.18%	90.91%	92.81%

From this data, it appears that 2008 had significantly more candidates who accepted funding, especially when looking at the difference between the 2008 House and 2010 House data in which there was a decrease of more than eight percent.

Maine’s data in table 2, below, is similar to table 1 in how I calculated each variable on major party legislative candidates who accepted public funding by election year, using the data from Maine’s legislature.

Table 2: Maine Major Party Legislative Candidates who Accepted Public Funding by Election Year					
	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Number of Candidates who accepted Public Funding	233	53	231	60	577
Number of Candidates who did not accept Public Funding	47	17	61	9	134
Total Number of Candidates	280	70	292	69	711
Percentage of Candidates who accepted funding	83.21%	75.71%	79.11%	86.96%	81.15%

The percentage of candidates who accepted pubic funding is lower on average in Maine than it is Minnesota for each legislature and year as well as for the total percentage. It does not seem like there is any pattern between the two election years.

Table 3 below is similar to Tables 1 and 2 in how I calculated each variable, except that I used the data from Arizona's legislature.

Table 3: Arizona Major Party Legislative Candidates who Accepted Public Funding by Election Year					
	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Number of Candidates who accepted Public Funding	69	41	51	24	185
Number of Candidates who did not accept Public Funding	29	11	40	26	106
Total Number of Candidates	98	52	91	50	291
Percentage of Candidates who accepted funding	70.41%	78.85%	56.04%	48%	63.57%

This table shows that there is a significant drop in the number of candidates who accepted public funding in Arizona between the 2008 elections and the 2010 elections. This decrease is most likely because of the *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* case, which was being decided by the Supreme Court during the 2010 election cycle. This case was determining whether candidates could be provided with additional public funds after their first initial grant, making candidates more hesitant to limit themselves by using funding. Additionally, fewer candidates accepted funding in Arizona overall than in Minnesota and Maine.

The data in Table 4 was also calculated in the same manner as the data in Tables 1, 2, and 3 with the data from Connecticut's legislature.

Table 4: Connecticut Major Party Legislative Candidates who Accepted Public Funding by Election Year

	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Number of Candidates who accepted Public Funding	184	49	187	43	463
Number of Candidates who did not accept Public Funding	55	14	75	22	166
Total Number of Candidates	239	63	262	65	629
Percentage of Candidates who accepted funding	76.99%	77.78%	71.37%	66.15%	73.61%

As in the case of Arizona, Connecticut faced a decline in their percentage of candidates who accepted public funding. This is most likely also because of the Supreme Court's decision on *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett*. Overall, however, there was a smaller decline than there was in Arizona. Additionally, a higher percentage of candidates accepted public funding in Connecticut than in Arizona, although it is lower overall than Minnesota and Maine.

Table 5, below, is a compilation of the total percentage of candidates that accepted public funding from each state from the data in tables 1 through 4, which better illustrates the comparison of public funding acceptance for each state.

Table 5: Total Percentage of Candidates who Accepted Public Funding by State				
	Arizona	Connecticut	Maine	Minnesota
Percentage of Candidates who Accepted Public Funding	63.57%	73.61%	81.15%	92.81%

Since Minnesota has a different program from the other three states that I looked at, it is interesting to see the difference in the percentage of candidates who received subsidies. Overall, Minnesota's program attracts significantly more candidates than any of the other states, despite that fact that districts in which candidates accept public funding have a much wider vote margin than districts in which a candidate does not.

To provide a further understanding of who accepted public funding, I looked at unopposed major party candidates to determine whether or not they accept funding. For table 6, In order to find the number of unopposed major party candidates who accepted public funding, I found the variable "unopposed candidate accepted public funds" by counting the number of unopposed candidates who accepted funds. I then counted the number of unopposed districts overall for the "total unopposed races" variable. I then divided "unopposed candidate accepted public funds" by "total unopposed races".

Table 6: Minnesota Unopposed Candidates Accepting Funding by Election Year				
	2008 House	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Unopposed candidate accepted public funds	0	4	2	6
Total Unopposed races	0	4	2	6
Percentage of unopposed candidates who accepted public funds	Not Applicable	100%	100%	100%

I was surprised that there were no unopposed candidates for the 2008 House races. I was also surprised that every unopposed major party legislative candidate in 2008 and 2010 accepted funds.

For Table 7, I calculated the percentage of unopposed candidates that accepted public funding in Maine by using the same method that I used for the Minnesota data in Table 8.

Table 7: Maine Unopposed Candidates Accepting Funding by Election Year					
	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Unopposed candidate accepted public funds	18	0	9	1	28
Total Unopposed races	22	0	10	1	33
Percentage of unopposed candidates who accepted public funds	81.82%	Not Applicable	90%	100%	84.85%

The number of unopposed candidates that accepted public funds in Maine was higher than I expected, although not as high as it was in Minnesota. Overall, the data is consistent with the total percentage of candidates who received public funds overall for Maine. I was also surprised with how few unopposed candidates there were in the Senate for 2008 and 2010.

For table 8, I used the same method that I used for the Minnesota and Maine data in Tables 6 and 7 to calculate Arizona's data on unopposed major party candidates who accepted public funding.

Table 8: Arizona Unopposed Candidates Accepting Funding by Election Year

	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Unopposed candidate accepted public funds	0	1	0	2	3
Total Unopposed races	0	8	0	10	18
Percentage of unopposed candidates who accepted public funds	Not Applicable	12.5%	Not Applicable	20%	16.67%

Compared to Minnesota and Maine, the percentage of unopposed major party candidates who accepted public funding was much lower, however, the data is somewhat limited because the House races are structured in a way that did not provide any unopposed races. However, after seeing the high rate at which unopposed candidates accepted funding in Minnesota and Maine, Arizona's 16.67% is drastically lower. This could be because unopposed candidates did not find it worth the trouble to apply for public funding in Arizona since unopposed candidates can only receive five times the amount of money they raised in qualifying contributions (Arizona Citizens' Clean Elections Commission. 2014b, 29).

Table 9 also has the same method for collecting data on unopposed major party candidates who accepted public funding as Minnesota, Maine, and Arizona in Tables 6, 7, and 8, using the Connecticut data.

Table 9: Connecticut Unopposed Candidates Accepting Funding by Election Year

	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Unopposed candidate accepted public funds	30	6	12	1	49
Total Unopposed races	63	9	40	7	119
Percentage of unopposed candidates who accepted public funds	47.62%	66.67%	30%	14.29%	41.18%

There does not seem to be any type of pattern in the percentage of unopposed candidates who accepted funding in Connecticut other than the fact that there is a decrease in the number of unopposed candidates who accepted funding in 2010 when compared to 2008. Connecticut's unopposed legislative candidates were overall about half as likely to accept public funding than they were in Maine but were twice as likely to accept funding as compared with Arizona.

Next, I compiled data in order to determine what percent of districts for each state and year had neither major party candidate accept public funding, one major party candidate accept public funding, and both major party candidates accept public funding in races with two major party candidates, which is provided in tables 10 through 14. This data can help to show which type of race typically occurs, which can help to show each states' ability to incentive candidates to accept their public funding program.

Table 10, below, shows the types of elections with public funding in Minnesota for each election year. When calculating this data, I only used races with a Democratic and Republican candidate and I only looked at whether the candidates accepted public funding for the general election, meaning that, if they accepted funding for their primary but not for the general election, then I counted them as not accepting. The first row, "both major party candidates accepted", shows the district total and the percentage of races for each election where both major party candidates accepted public funding. The percentage was calculated by adding the total number of districts that had both their major party candidates accept funding and divided by the total number of races with two major party candidates for that particular election. "One Major Party Candidate Accepted" was calculated in a similar manner but with races where only one of the two major party candidates accepted public funding. "Neither major party candidate accepted" was also calculated in the same way but with races where neither the Democrat or the Republican accepted public funds.

Table 10: Minnesota's Types of Election with Funding by Election Year					
		2008 House	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Both Major Party Candidates Accepted	Districts Total	128	110	52	290
	Percent	96%	85%	80%	88%
One Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	5	15	13	33
	Percent	4%	12%	20%	10%
Neither Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	1	5	0	6
	Percent	1%	4%	0%	2%
Total Number of Competitive Races		134	130	65	329

Minnesota's percentage of races where both candidates accepted funding seemed very high to me considering that Donnay and Ramsden said that Minnesota's program generally favors the incumbent. Although it would appear that facing an incumbent would deter the challenger from using public funding, in just ten percent of the races only one major party candidate accepted funding.

In calculating the data for Table 11, I used the same method that I used in calculating Minnesota's data in Table 10.

Table 11: Maine's Types of Election with Funding by Election Year						
		2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Both Major Party Candidates Accepted	Districts Total	86	21	86	27	220
	Percent	67%	60%	61%	82%	65%
One Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	42	11	48	4	105
	Percent	33%	31%	34%	12%	31%
Neither Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	1	3	7	2	13
	Percent	1%	9%	5%	6%	4%
Total Number of Competitive Races		129	35	141	33	338

Maine's percentage with both major party candidates accepting public funding was smaller than it was in Minnesota by 23 percent. There was also a higher percentage of districts where one candidate accepted public funding overall compared with Minnesota.

For table 12, I calculated Arizona's data using the same method I used to calculate table 10 with Minnesota's data and Table 11 with Maine's data.

Table 12: Arizona's Types of Election with Funding by Election Year				
		2008 Senate	2010 Senate	Total
Both Major Party Candidates Accepted	Districts Total	10	3	13
	Percent	50%	15%	32.5%
One Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	8	14	22
	Percent	40%	70%	55%
Neither Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	2	3	5
	Percent	10%	15%	12.5%
Total Number of Competitive Races		20	20	40

In Arizona's 2008 and 2010 legislative elections, even though there was a significantly lower percentage of districts where both candidates accepted public funding than there was in Minnesota and Maine, there was a higher percentage of districts where one major party candidate accepted public funding. Additionally, there is a decline in the percentage of districts where two candidates accept public funding while there is an increase in districts where only one candidate accepts public funding between the two elections. This change could have been explained by the effect of the Supreme Court decision on *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* because candidates, especially challengers, might have been wary of the fact that the other candidate could decide not to accept funding and be able to outspend them substantially. Although the case was still being decided by the Supreme Court, the provision that allows for matching grants was deemed unconstitutional in early 2010, before the elections.

Table 13, below, shows the types of elections with funding in Connecticut for each election year using the same method used in Tables 10, 11, and 12 with the data for each other state.

Table 13: Connecticut's Types of Election with Funding by Election Year

		2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Both Major Party Candidates Accepted	Districts Total	69	17	72	15	173
	Percent	78%	63%	65%	52%	68%
One Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	16	9	30	13	68
	Percent	18%	33%	27%	45%	27%
Neither Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	3	1	8	1	13
	Percent	3%	4%	7%	3%	5%
Total Number of Competitive Races		88	27	110	29	254

Connecticut has a slightly higher average for the total percentage of districts where both major party candidates accepted public funding than Maine and Arizona, although it is still substantially lower than Minnesota's average. Additionally, Connecticut's percentage of competitive races where one major party candidate accepted funding is lower than Maine and Arizona but higher than Minnesota. There does seem to be a slight decline in the percentage of candidates that districts where both major party candidates received public funding while there is an increase in the percentage of districts where one major party candidate accepted public funding, although there is not as drastic as a change as there was for the Arizona data.

Table 14, below, is the compilation of the totals for each state from tables 10, 11, 12, and 13 to better illustrate the differences between states.

Table 14: Compilation of Total Types of Election with Funding by State					
		Minnesota	Maine	Arizona	Connecticut
Both Major Party Candidates Accepted	Districts Total	290	220	13	173
	Percent	88%	65%	32.5%	68%
One Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	33	105	22	68
	Percent	10%	31%	55%	27%
Neither Major Party Candidate Accepted	Districts Total	6	13	5	13
	Percent	2%	4%	12.5%	5%
Total Number of Competitive Races		329	338	40	254

This table makes it clear that Minnesota had the highest percentage of competitive districts in which both major party candidates accepted public funding. Additionally, it shows that Arizona had the highest percentage of districts where there was one major party candidate and where neither candidate accepted public funding.

For my second research question, I hypothesized that the state that would have the most competitive elections among major party legislative candidates who accept public funding for their campaigns would be Arizona then Connecticut and Maine, since Connecticut and Maine have smaller districts, which Malhotra determined was a reason that Arizona was more competitive than Maine when public funding was used. Additionally, I hypothesized that Minnesota would have the least competitive elections, because Minnesota's subsidy program would provide the least success compared with the other states' full public funding programs, since it was much more limited than the other three programs. In order to answer my second research question, I compiled data that is found in tables 15 through 19.

In Table 15, I calculated the average vote margin for each election, for Minnesota, dividing the data into three groups: neither candidate accepted public funding, one candidate accepted public funding, and both candidates accepted public funding. I calculated the margin by taking the average of the absolute value of the difference between the Republican candidates' percentage of the vote when calculated without minor party candidates and the Democratic candidates' percentage of the vote for each election and type of race.

Table 15: Minnesota's Vote Margin by Acceptance of Public Funding in Districts by Election

	2008 House	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Neither Candidate Accepted Public Funding	31.45%	11.58%	Not Applicable	14.89%
One Candidate Accepted Public Funding	45.77%	32.05%	22.80%	30.49%
Both Candidates Accepted Public Funding	24.78%	23.43%	20.58%	23.51%
Average Vote Margin	25.62%	23.97%	21.02%	24.05%

It seems from this data that Minnesota consistently had the most competitive elections when neither candidate accepts public funding. Additionally, elections were least competitive when only one candidate accepted public funding. This could be because many of the candidates who accepted subsidies were incumbents so that accepting subsidies in addition to their typical incumbency advantage provided them with a further advantage.

Table 16 uses Maine's data with the same method provided in table 15 with the Minnesota data.

Table 16: Maine's Vote Margin by Acceptance of Public Funding in Districts by Election					
	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Neither Candidate Accepted Public Funding	52.59%	38.40%	29.33%	38.80%	34.67%
One Candidate Accepted Public Funding	21.27%	26.90%	26.24%	26.69%	24.38%
Both Candidates Accepted Public Funding	20.98%	15.64%	17.57%	16.31%	18.56%
Average Vote Margin	21.32%	21.13%	21.11%	19.37%	21.01%

In Maine, there was a consistent decrease in the vote margin as more candidates accepted public funding. This indicates that their elections became more competitive as more candidates accepted public funding.

Table 17 uses the same method used in tables 15 and 16 to calculate vote margin by acceptance of public funding for the Arizona elections. Since the Arizona House had multimember districts, its data was not used for these calculations.

Table 17: Arizona’s Vote Margin by Acceptance of Public Funding in Districts by Election			
	2008 Senate	2010 Senate	Total
Neither Candidate Accepted Public Funding	38.50%	20.89%	29.70%
One Candidate Accepted Public Funding	26.76%	26.10%	26.36%
Both Candidates Accepted Public Funding	18.20%	10.96%	16.53%
Average Vote Margin	24.47%	23.05%	23.79%

Arizona, like Maine, saw an increase in competitiveness as more candidates ran using public funding, except in 2010, where elections where less competitive when one candidate accepted funding. However, in both election years there was a significant increase in competitiveness between elections where neither major party candidate accepted compared and elections where both major party candidates accepted. It seems that there is a greater difference between each type of election than there was in Maine.

Table 18 shows Connecticut’s vote margin by acceptance of public funding using the same method that was used to calculate tables 15, 16, and 17.

Table 18: Connecticut's Vote Margin by Acceptance of Public Funding in Districts by Election					
	2008 House	2008 Senate	2010 House	2010 Senate	Total
Neither Candidate Accepted Public Funding	55.22%	18.99%	34.29%	64.92%	42.06%
One Candidate Accepted Public Funding	54.66%	51.24%	30.27%	29.84%	38.71%
Both Candidates Accepted Public Funding	22.70%	20.90%	17.20%	13.18%	19.41%
Average Vote Margin	29.62%	30.94%	22.08%	23.64%	25.80%

Connecticut, like Maine and Arizona, has an increase in competitiveness as more candidates accept public funding with the exception of the 2008 Senate race. There does seem to be a smaller increase between districts where neither candidate accepted public funding and districts where one candidate accepted public funding in the Senate races and the races actually become less competitive in the 2008 Senate race when one candidate accepts funding.

Table 19, below, is a compilation of tables 15, 16, 17, and 18, showing the mean percentage margin of the vote between the major party candidates from each state. The data is divided by state and by the type of election, whether both candidates accepted public funding, one accepted public funding, or neither accepted public funding. The last row shows the overall average vote margin among major party elections.

Table 19: Vote Margin by Acceptance of Public Funding in Districts by State				
	Arizona	Connecticut	Maine	Minnesota
Neither Candidate Accepted Public Funding	29.70%	42.06%	34.67%	14.89%
One Candidate Accepted Public Funding	26.36%	38.71%	24.38%	30.49%
Both Candidates Accepted Public Funding	16.53%	19.41%	18.56%	23.51%
Average Vote Margin of State	23.79%	25.80%	21.01%	24.05%

This table shows that there is a decrease in the margin of the vote for each candidate that accepts funding for all states except Minnesota. This finding follows my hypothesis, since it confirms Malhotra's conclusion on the Maine and Arizona programs as well as Donnay and Ramsden's conclusion on their analysis of Minnesota's program. One aspect of the data that is somewhat surprising is that the difference in vote margin between elections where neither candidate accepted funding and where both candidates accepted funding was greatest in Connecticut's elections, with a change of about 23 percent. Comparatively, Arizona's difference was about thirteen percent while Maine's was about 16. Although I was also surprised that Minnesota's elections were least competitive when one candidate accepted public funding, this result could be explained if the one candidate that is accepting funding is the incumbent, since it would follow Donnay and Ramsden's conclusion that grants typically help the incumbents in Minnesota.

Discussion of Data Analysis:

In analyzing the outcome of my first research question using the percentage of candidates that accepted public funding among the 2008 and 2010 legislative elections for each state, I determined that my hypothesis was wrong. Although I thought that Arizona and Connecticut would have the highest percentage of candidates that accepted public funding while Minnesota's would have the lowest percentage of candidates that accepted public funding, Minnesota's elections had by far the highest percentage of candidates who used their program, then Maine, then Connecticut, with Arizona having the lowest percentage. The decrease in percentage of candidates that accepted public funding between 2008 and 2010 in Arizona and Connecticut could be attributed to the *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* decision and the Second Circuit Court of Appeals case, which might have decreased a candidate's incentive to accept funding, since candidates could have been worried that they would not have enough funds during their campaign, this could be particularly important if they are a challenger where the incumbent did not accept funding, since challengers would not be able to increase their spending accordingly. Since Minnesota's program differs from the others, it makes sense that there would not be a similar decline, however, it is odd that there was not a change in Maine between the 2008 and 2010 elections since they have a very similar program to Arizona and Connecticut.

After looking at competitive elections, I looked at the percentage of unopposed candidates who accepted public funding. This data seemed to reflect the overall percentage of major party candidates who accepted public funding such that Minnesota had the highest percentage of major party candidates who accepted public funding, then Maine, then Connecticut, and then Arizona had the lowest percentage of major party candidates accept public funding. It is strange that Minnesota's unopposed candidates agreed to abide by their programs rules at such high rates since they are restricted in spending and they could not receive subsidies since they were unopposed. In some cases, candidates that accepted could have been in a party dominant district where they faced a challenger in the primary, so they used subsidies, and then decided to maintain their acceptance of public funding for the general election.

Next, I looked at the data separated by election type: both candidates accepted, one candidate accepted, and neither candidate accepted public funding in order to find what percentage of candidates for each type of competitive election accepted public funding for each legislative election. Although this data was somewhat restricted for Arizona since I could only use the 2008 and 2010 Senate data, it still gives an indication of the program as a whole. The percentage of districts in which two candidates accepted public funding decreased from 50% to 15% between the two elections in Arizona. Connecticut also saw a decrease in the percentage of districts in which both candidates accepted between 2008 and 2010 or they could have applied without knowing that they would be unopposed in the general election. Maine had a similar decrease, but only in the Senate elections. Overall, Minnesota had the highest percentage of districts where both candidates accepted public funding, then Connecticut, then Maine, and Arizona had the lowest percentage.

In analyzing the data, I found that my hypothesis for my second research question was partly correct. I found that there is an increase in competitiveness when public funding is used in all states except Minnesota. Additionally, for the legislative elections that I analyzed there is an increase from when one major party candidate accepts funding to two candidates accepting for each state except Minnesota, where elections are most competitive when neither major party candidate accepts public funding and they are least competitive when one candidate accepts public funding. This seemed to support my hypothesis as well as what Malhotra found in Maine and Arizona and what Donnay and Ramsden found in Minnesota. I was surprised that Connecticut's elections increased in competitiveness the most between elections where neither candidate accepted and elections where both candidates accepted. Although my hypothesis was partially wrong because I hypothesized that Arizona's elections would have the largest decrease in vote margin because they have large districts which makes any increase in spending more significant than if their districts were smaller. My hypothesis that Minnesota's elections would see the smallest increase in competitiveness was correct.

In general, it seems counterintuitive that Minnesota had the highest percentage of candidates who accepted public funding while they had an increase in vote margin when public funding was used by both major party candidates since it seems from the data that accepting subsidies actually hurt the competitiveness of elections in Minnesota.

From this data analysis, I determined that my hypothesis that Arizona would have the highest percentage of candidates who accepted public funding was incorrect while my hypothesis that Minnesota would have the lowest increase in competitiveness was correct.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction:

In this thesis, I discussed the effects of public funding by reviewing past literature on public funding, presented theories pertaining to public funding, provided a history of the implementation of various campaign financing laws, and provided insight on the states that currently have public funding programs. Next, I explained the public funding programs in Minnesota, Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut, highlighting differences between each program that could have an effect on their competitiveness. Then, I analyzed data that I collected on state legislative elections in Connecticut, Maine, Arizona, and Minnesota in order to answer my research questions, which were: " Among the states that provide full public funding for their legislative candidates, which state is most successfully able to provide public funding programs that incentivize their state legislative candidates to accept the limitations of their public financing laws?" and "Which state has the most competitive elections among major party legislative candidates who accept public funding for their campaigns?" Finally, I provided the results from my data analysis, discussing how the results differed from my hypotheses.

Discussion of Findings:

For my first research question, I hypothesized that Maine, Connecticut, and Arizona would have similar success in their ability to provide public funding programs because they each offer similar public funding options, while Minnesota would be less able to incentivize candidates because Minnesota's program offered subsidies as opposed to full public funding, which could adversely affect elections' competitiveness.

I determined that my hypothesis was incorrect, finding that Minnesota had the highest percentage of candidates who accepted public funding, followed by Maine, then Connecticut, and Arizona having the lowest percentage. This could partly be attributed to *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* and the Second Circuit Court of Appeals case that were both being decided during the 2010 election cycle*,* since there was a decline in the percentage of candidates who accepted public funding in Arizona and Connecticut between 2008 and 2010, while these cases were being decided. This could also explain why there was not a similar decline in Maine in 2010.

For my second research question, I hypothesized that Arizona would have the most competitive elections among major party legislative candidates who accept public funding for their campaigns since Malhotra found that Arizona had more competitive elections than Maine because Arizona has larger districts so providing more money to candidates makes a bigger impact than in Maine, and since Connecticut also has significantly smaller districts than Arizona I hypothesized that Arizona would have the most competitive elections followed by Connecticut and Maine. I hypothesized that Minnesota would be the least competitive state because Minnesota's program is a more limited program, being a subsidy program instead of a full public funding program, which does not seem to aid challengers as much as the full public funding programs in Connecticut, Maine, and Arizona.

I found that my hypothesis for my second research question was partly correct. I found an increase in competitiveness when public funding is used in all states except Minnesota, in which there was actually a significant decrease between districts where neither candidate accepted subsidies and districts where both candidates accepted subsidies. However, I was party incorrect in my hypothesis because Connecticut had the largest difference in the vote margin between districts where neither candidate accepted public funding and districts where both candidates accepted public funding when I hypothesized that Arizona would have the largest difference. This could partly be attributed to the limitation in Arizona's data, since there was only information for the Senate elections. It could also be attributed to the Supreme Court's decision on *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett* because fewer candidates accepted public funding, making the data limited which could explain why there was a large difference between the vote margins between 2008 and 2010 in both Arizona and Connecticut.

Impact of Public Funding on Democracy:

One of the most important factors that could have affected the results for both my research questions was the Supreme Court's decision on *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett*. Although there was a large decline in the percentage of candidates who accepted funding between 2008 and 2010 after the Court's decision for each election except Maine's Senate election, acceptance rates were still fairly high on average, with Arizona having the lowest percentage at 63.57%. This shows that public funding programs in each of the states that were studied have been successfully able to attract candidates to their programs. Additionally, despite the changes that have occurred as a result of *Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett*, it still appeared that public funding enhanced competitiveness in the 2010 Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut elections, after the case prevented candidates from receiving a larger matching grants when their opponent outspends more than their initial grant.

It is clear from the data analysis on the difference in election competitiveness between the types of public funding programs that full public funding programs, such as the programs in

Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut are much more successful at increasing the competitiveness of elections while subsidy programs as in Minnesota, can actually decrease in competitiveness when both major party candidates accept subsidies.

Furthermore, this analysis has remained consistent with past literature that has been written on campaign financing. It shows that Minnesota could have decreased in competitiveness because the spending limits are too low for challengers to successfully compete with incumbents. Additionally, it is consistent with past literature because, for each of the programs with full public funding, election competitiveness was higher when both major party candidates accepted funding. Which further demonstrates Malhotra's conclusion that an increase in funding benefits the challenger because candidates are able to have a larger amount of funding earlier on in an election.

Appendix

All information provided here is from sources found on Minnesota, Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut governmental websites. Full citation can be found in the bibliography.

The table below is the Biennial Adjustment chart for Arizona's 2008 election cycle. This shows the adjusted contribution limits and expenditure limits for candidates, which, pursuant to their public financing law, is done for each election cycle. This information is provided by Arizona Secretary of State's Office "Clean Elections Act 2007 Biennial Adjustments" (Arizona Secretary of State's Office 2007).

Clean Elections Act 2007 Biennial Adjustments

Pursuant to A.R.S.§16-959(A)

Participating Candidate Expenditure & Contribution Limits for 2008 Elections

Office	**Primary Election Spending Limits** A.R.S.§16-961(G)*	**General Election Spending Limits** A.R.S.§16-961(H)*	**Maximum Independent Expenditure Limit** A.R.S.§16-941(D)	**Maximum Early Contributions (Aggregate)** A.R.S.§16-945(A)(2)	**Maximum Early Contributions (Individual)** A.R.S.§16-945(A)(1)	**Maximum Personal Contributions** A.R.S.§16-941(A)(2)
Governor	$638,222	$957,333	$610	$49,180	$130	$1,230
Secretary Of State	$165,378	$248,067	$610	$25,840	$130	$1,230
Attorney General	$165,378	$248,067	$610	$25,840	$130	$1,230
Treasurer	$82,680	$124,020	$610	$12,920	$130	$1,230
Superintendent Of Public Instruction	$82,680	$124,020	$610	$12,920	$130	$1,230
Corporation Commissioner	$82,680	$124,020	$610	$12,920	$130	$1,230
Mine Inspector	$41,349	$62,024	$610	$6,460	$130	$1,230
Legislature	$12,921	$19,382	$610	$3,230	$130	$610

The table below, "Clean Elections Act 2009-2010 Biennial Adjustments," shows the biennial adjustment for Arizona's 2010 election, using the same criteria as the previous table (Arizona Secretary of State's Office 2009).

Clean Elections Act 2009-2010 Biennial Adjustments

Pursuant to A.R.S.§16-959(A)

Participating Candidate Expenditure & Contribution Limits for 2010 Elections

Office	Primary Election Spending Limits A.R.S.§16-961(G)	General Election Spending Limits A.R.S.§16-961(H)	Maximum Independent Expenditure Limit A.R.S.§16-941(D)	Maximum Early Contributions (Aggregate) A.R.S.§16-945(A)(2)	Maximum Early Contributions (Individual) A.R.S.§16-945(A)(1)	Maximum Personal Contributions A.R.S.§16-941(A)(2)
Governor	$707,447	$1,061,171	$640	$51,250	$140	$1,280
Secretary Of State	$183,311	$274,967	$640	$45,828	$140	$1,280
Attorney General	$183,311	$274,967	$640	$45,828	$140	$1,280
Treasurer	$91,645	$137,468	$640	$22,911	$140	$1,280
Superintendent Of Public Instruction	$91,645	$137,468	$640	$22,911	$140	$1,280
Corporation Commissioner	$91,645	$137,468	$640	$22,911	$140	$1,280
Mine Inspector	$45,838	$68,757	$640	$11,460	$140	$1,280
Legislature	$14,319	$21,479	$640	$3,580	$140	$640

Below is a table for the qualifying threshold for Connecticut state Senate and state House candidates from the State Elections Enforcement Commission's Citizens' Election Program "Basic Requirements-2010 Overview," which were requirements used in both the 2008 and 2010 elections (State Elections Enforcement Commission 2010, 2).

Qualification Thresholds for General Assembly Offices		
Office Sought	**Aggregate Contribution Requirement – Individuals Only**	**Minimum Individual Resident Contributions Between $5 - $100**
State Senator	$15,000	300 residents of municipalities included, in whole or in part, in the district
State Representative	$5,000	150 residents of municipalities included, in whole or in part, in the district

The table below also shows requirements for Connecticut candidates for the 2008 and 2010 election cycles, showing the grant amount that each type of candidate can receive when accepted to the public funding program (State Elections Enforcement Commission 2010, 5).

Grants for Major Party Candidates			
Office Sought	**General Election *Nominated Candidate with Major Party Opponent***	**General Election *Nominated Candidate with No Opposition***	**General Election *Nominated Candidate With Limited Minor or Petitioning Party Opponents***
Governor	$3,000,000	$900,000	$1,800,000
Lieutenant Governor	NA	NA	NA
Attorney General	$750,000	$225,000	$450,000
State Comptroller	$750,000	$225,000	$450,000
State Treasurer	$750,000	$225,000	$450,000
Secretary of State	$750,000	$225,000	$450,000
State Senator	$88,400	$26,520	$53,040
State Representative	$26,000	$7,800	$15,600

The table below is also for Connecticut candidates who receive public funding, detailing the expenditure limits before they are accepted to their public funding program (State Elections

Enforcement Commission 2010, 8).

Expenditure Limits during "Qualifying Period"			
Office Sought	**Qualifying Amount**	**Maximum Amount of Candidate's Personal Funds**	**Maximum Expenditures during Qualifying Period**
Governor	$250,000	$20,000	$250,000 - $270,000
Lieutenant Governor	$75,000	$10,000	$75,000 - $85,000
Attorney General	$75,000	$10,000	$75,000 - $85,000
State Comptroller	$75,000	$10,000	$75,000 - $85,000
State Treasurer	$75,000	$10,000	$75,000 - $85,000
Secretary of State	$75,000	$10,000	$75,000 - $85,000
State Senator	$15,000	$2,000	$15,000 - $17,000
State Representative	$5,000	$1,000	$5,000 - $6,000

The following page is the total distribution on public funding to candidates for Maine from 2000 to 2008 and the breakdown of public funding for 2008 (MCEA 2009, 2).

◆ **TOTAL PAYMENTS TO MCEA CANDIDATES**

Election Year	Legislative	Gubernatorial	Total
2000	$965,608	N/A	$965,608
2002	$2,088,899	$1,216,669	$3,305,568
2004	$2,799,617	N/A	$2,799,617
2006	$3,347,775	$3,534,615	$6,882,390
2008	$2,953,332	N/A	$2,953,332

◆ **TOTAL PAYMENTS 2008 MCEA CANDIDATES**

Primary Initial Distribution	$348,347.29
Primary Matching Funds	$20,508.73
Primary Total	**$368,856.02**
General Initial Distribution	$2,120,991.99
General Matching Funds	$463,483.52
General Election Total	**$2,584,475.51**
Total Payments for 2008 Election Cycle	**$2,953,331.53**

The next two pages below show the information on full public funding programs,including Veromont, Maine, Arizona, and Connecticut (NCSL 2007). For the purpose of this study, Vermont was excluded for the data since their full public funding is only for gubernatorial races (NCSL 2007).

NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

Public Financing of Election Campaigns

Candidate Campaigns: Full Public Financing ("Clean Elections")

	To qualify for public funds, candidate must raise (or spend):		Public funds are disbursed according to:		Spending Limits
	Seed Money	In contributions satisfying the following criteria:	Distribution method or matching ratio	Up to a maximum amount of:	
STATES WITH PUBLIC FUNDING FOR *GUBERNATORIAL* CANDIDATES ONLY					
Vermont 17 VSA §§ 2851-2856	Gov: $35,000 Lt. Gov: $17,500	Contributions of no more than $50 each from no fewer than 1,500 (gov.) or 750 (lt. gov.) individuals who are registered to vote in Vermont No more than 25% of total qualifying contributors may be residents of the same county	Flat grant for full amount, to the extent that funds are available	Primary / general Gov: $75,000 / $225,000 Lt gov: $25,000 / $75,000 For both, grant for primary election is reduced by an amount equal to the candidate's qualifying contributions Incumbents receive 85% of above-listed amounts	Per two-year election cycle: Gov: $300,000 Lt gov: $100,000 Other statewide: $45,000 State sen: $4,000 + $2,500 for each additional seat in the senate district State rep: $2,000 in single-member districts; $3,000 in two-member districts Incumbents of statewide offices: 85% of the amounts above Incumbents in the legislature: 90% of the amounts above
STATES WITH PUBLIC FUNDING FOR *GUBERNATORIAL* AND *LEGISLATIVE* CANDIDATES					
Maine[a] 21-A MRSA §1121 et seq.	Candidate must receive the following number of qualifying contributions: Gov: 2,500 State Sen: 150 State Rep: 50	$5 contributions from registered voters within the candidate's district	Flat grant for full amount; paid at beginning of primary and general election periods	Amount equal to spending limit	75% of average expenditure for office sought in 2 previous general elections. Legislative candidates in uncontested elections receive a smaller grant (about 1/3 of the grant for candidates in contested elections) 2006 amounts: Primary / general Gov: $200,000 / $400,000 State Sen: $7,746 / 20,082 State Rep: $1,504 / 4,362

Continued on next page

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures
December 2005
For more information, contact Jennie Drage Bowser at 303-364-7700.

	To qualify for public funds, candidate must raise (or spend):		Public funds are disbursed according to:		Spending Limits
	Seed Money	In contributions satisfying the following criteria:	Distribution method or matching ratio	Up to a maximum amount of:	
STATES WITH PUBLIC FUNDING FOR *GUBERNATORIAL, OTHER STATEWIDE* AND *LEGISLATIVE* CANDIDATES					
Arizona[a] §16-940 et seq.	Candidate must receive the following number of qualifying contributions: For 2008 election: Legis: 220 For 2006 election: Gov: 4,000 AG, Sec St: 2,500 Other SW: 1,500 Legis: 220	$5 contributions from registered voters within the candidate's district	Flat grant for full amount; paid at beginning of primary election period and beginning of general election period	Party cand: amt equal to spending limit Independent cand: amt equal to 70% of spending limit Unopposed cand: amt equal to $5 x number qualified contribs for cand	For 2008 election: Primary / general Legis: $12,921 / $19,382 For 2006 election: Primary / general Gov: $453,849 / $680,774 AG & Sec St: $95,550 / $143,325 Other SW: $47,770 / $71,655 Legis: $11,945 / $17,918
Connecticut[c]	Gov: $250,000 Other SW: $75,000 Senate: $15,000 House: $5,000	For gubernatorial candidates, at least $225,000 ($67,500 for other statewide candidates) must come from contributions from state residents of up to $100. For senate candidates, at least 300 contributions (150 for candidates for state house) of $5 - 100 must come from residents of municipalities included, in whole or in part, in their legislative district.	Flat grant for full amount; paid at beginning of primary and general election periods.	Primary / General Gov: $1.5 million / 3 million Other SW: $450,000 / 750,000 Senate: $50,000 / 85,000 House: $15,000 / 25,000 Candidates may contribute personal funds, limited to the following amounts: Gov: up to $20,000 Other SW: up to $10,000 Senate: up to $2,000 House: up to $1,000	Primary / General Gov: $1,250,000 / 3,000,000 Other SW: $375,000 / 750,000 Senate: $35,000 / 75,000 House: $10,000 / 25,000 Unopposed major party candidates receive 30% of the full amount for the general election. A major party candidate opposed only by a minor party or petitioning candidate receives 60% of the full amount in the general election.

(a) If a non-participating candidate's spending (added together with independent expenditures) exceeds the established limits, matching funds are provided to any opposing participating candidate, and spending limits are re-adjusted

(b) The public financing provisions in Massachusetts were enacted by a citizen initiative in 1998 and have not yet been used in an election. The provisions require an appropriation by the Legislature before they can be implemented.

(c) Connecticut's public financing program takes effect in 2008 for legislative candidates and in 2010 for statewide candidates, with one exception: legislative candidates participating in special elections may begin receiving grants on December 31, 2006. The amounts represented in this table are for major party candidates in regular elections. Different amounts apply for major party candidates in special elections, and for minor party and petitioning candidates in any election

Below is information on the total amount of subsidies provided to Minnesota's candidates (MCFPDB 2013b).

PUBLIC FINANCING
DIRECT PAYMENTS AND POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION REFUNDS

Political parties and candidates for state offices who agree to limit their campaign spending during an election cycle may receive direct payments (public subsidy program) and issue contribution receipts that are reimbursable to contributors up to established limits (political contributions refund program). The state's expenditures on these programs are shown in the following table. (Minn. Stat. §10A.322.)

1994 and 1998 – Constitutional Office (C) and House of Representative Candidates (H)
1996 and 2000 – Senate (S) and House of Representative Candidates (H)
2004 and 2008 – House of Representative Candidates (H)
2002, 2006 and 2010 – Constitutional Office (C), Senate (S), and House of Representative (H)

ELECTION	***YEAR***	***CANDIDATES***		***PARTIES***		***TOTAL***
		Direct Payments	*Pol. Contr. Refunds*	*Direct Payments*	*Pol. Contr. Refunds*	
C-H	1994	$4,029,600	$2,590,062	$138,481	$1,174,142	$7,932,285
--	1995	0	1,251,212	102,922	1,718,890	3,073,024
S-H	1996	3,985,332	2,423,185	141,794	2,119,361	8,669,672
--	1997	0	1,320,330	104,068	2,113,268	3,537,666
C-H	1998	3,891,560	2,732,657	96,645	2,223,207	8,944,069
--	1999	0	1,391,596	100,583	2,420,940	3,913,119
S-H	2000	3,227,600	2,498,986	72,630	2,757,914	8,557,130
--	2001	0	1,377,521	86,891	2,818,433	4,282,845
C-S-H	2002	4,442,832	3,379,344	110,002	3,138,637	11,070,815
--	2003	0	1,276,023	115,312	3,334,953	4,726,288
H	2004	1,736,166	2,176,837	106,024	4,167,619	8,186,646
--	2005	0	1,672,912	107,736	3,230,838	5,011,486
C-S-H	2006	4,796,523	2,951,200	95,424	3,252,821	11,095,968
--	2007	0	1,205,155	97,795	3,193,731	4,496,681
H	2008	1,608,105	2,045,086	90,712	4,024,797	7,768,760
--	2009	0	1,164,267	87,208	2,618,555	3,870,030
C-S-H	2010	3,998,646	0	81,261	0	4,079,907
	TOTALS	**$31,716,424**	**$31,456,373**	**$1,735,488**	**$44,308,106**	**$109,216,391**

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